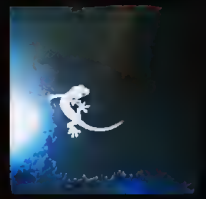

Here's volume 1 with greetings
I hope you like it!

Tokage

Tokage 1

TOKYOPOP

Tokyo ⊙ rage

Tokage

Tokage

Tokage

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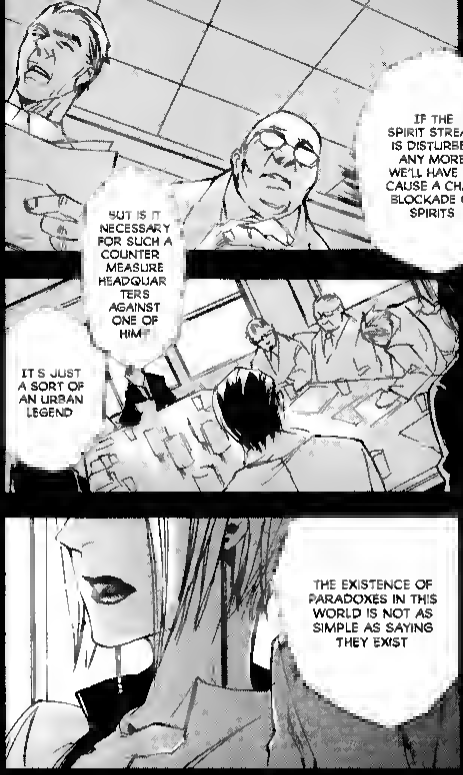
THE DEATH OF "TOKAGE" IS CONFIRMED.
IT IS BELIEVED THAT HE WILL MOVE TO A NEW BODY WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.
ACKNOWLEDGED GUARD THE SURROUNDING AREA. CATCH HIM BEFORE HE AWAKENS!

Chapter 1

"Tokage" also means "lizard."

I'VE HEARD OF HIM
BUT FOR SUCH A THING TO TRULY EXIST—
KURIYAMA!
YES!
A DISTORTION WILL DEFINITELY APPEAR WHERE HE APPEARS
HURRY AND CONFIRM HIS LOCATION!
A CURSE WHERE ONE DOESN'T DIE EVEN IF ONE DIES — IS A FRIGHTENING THING


IF THE SPIRIT STREAM IS DISTURBED ANY MORE WE'LL HAVE TO CAUSE A CHAIN BLOCKADE OF SPIRITS
BUT IS IT NECESSARY FOR SUCH A COUNTER MEASURE HEADQUARTERS AGAINST ONE OF HIM?
IT'S JUST A SORT OF AN URBAN LEGEND
You are cursed, Tokage.
You can no longer atone for your sin even in death!
THE EXISTENCE OF PARADOXES IN THIS WORLD IS NOT AS SIMPLE AS SAYING THEY EXIST
Fall from the cycles of reincarnation,
and wander this world for all eternity.
IF IT FORCIBLY CREATES A DISTORTION IT WILL SUMMON ALL SORTS OF FILTHY DIFFICULTIES.

THIS IS ALSO TO PROTECT OUR COUNTRY S SPIRITUAL PUBLIC ORDER.
WE WILL ERADICATE THIS ONE WHO EXISTS WE CANNOT ALLOW THIS FORTUNATE OPPORTUNITY TO ESCAPE
Receive your eternal punishment.
AFTER ALL WE HAVE BEEN CHASING HIM FOR NEARLY EIGHT HUN- DRED YEARS

WHEEEEEE
WHEEEEEE
WHEEEEEE
WHEEEEEE
IT'S A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT!
THE TRUCK CRASHED ONTO THE SIDE-WALK...!!
IT SEEMS THAT NUMER OUS PEDES TRIANS WERE CAUGHT IN THIS
MURMUR
MURMUR
MURMUR
WHOA, THAT'S SOME BLOOD...
YUCK, I SAW SOME-THING!
ALIVA, THERE'S A BODY!
MOVE!
OPEN THE ROAD!
IS HE CON-SCIOUS?
STILL
This body's no good anymore...
HE PROBABLY CAN'T BE SAVED...
ICK, THAT LOOKS HOR-RIBLE...
THE GLASS...

WHEE
WHEEEEEE!!!
PLEASE OPEN THE ROAD!
THE DEATH WAS PROBABLY INSTANTANEOUS...
THERE'S STILL A GIRL UNDER...
MOVE!
I've finally managed...
...to chase his scent this far!
Will it still not end?
She probably can't be saved, but there are few external injuries.
Looks like she can still be used.
THUMP

NO!
I DON'T WANT SUCH A THING!
Did you believe you would be forgiven?
There is no place for you in either this world or that world.
Death is equally granted to everything.
then continuing to live means...
STOP
...an eternal punishment
but if it means a moment of peace,
Eternal life means...
I DON'T WANT IT ANYMORE
You will have an eternal life.

I don't want anything anymore!
STOP!
You're not dead.
Live!
...that I will not be forgiven for all eternity
Don't call me!
STOP!
NO MORE!
Tokage.

I only want
one thing.
a story with
an end.

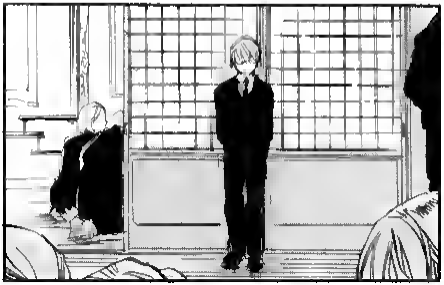
Chapter 1

Tokage

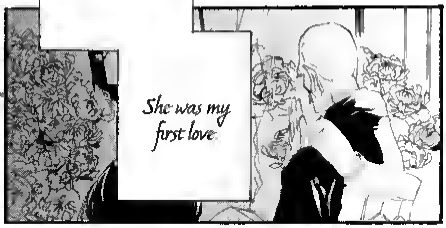
The end
was sudden.

Yuuka-neechan died.
It was a traffic accident.
She was only seventeen.
...IT'S KIND OF...
TOO SUDDEN THIS THING

To me, who was raised at the shrine with my grandpa after my parents divorced,



she was like a real sister



She was my first love

I'M...
THE WORST
EVEN SO, TEARS AREN'T COMING OUT
AH
I'LL GET THE TEA.
I'M SORRY
IT'S ALL RIGHT SHINOBU-KUN
OBASAN
If you can't feel anything,
then it's the same whether you live or die
I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD HAVE DIED
I'M SORRY.

YOU TWO WERE LIKE REAL SIBLINGS
I'M SORRY EVEN AT A TIME LIKE THIS.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, OBASAN. PLEASE REST
Yuuka-neechan was kind and beautiful
I STILL
DON'T FEEL LIKE IT'S REAL.
I'M SORRY.
Even though,
I won't see her ever again.

CHASU
THERE'S SOMEONE IN THE ROOM WHERE THE COFFIN IS...?
IT WOULDN'T BE A CONDOLENCE GIFT THIEF WOULD IT?
!!
clatter
clatter
OUCH!
DAMN IT!
WHO'S THE—
LATER

Ow
A GIRL'S BODY REALLY IS HARD TO MOVE
CLATTER
ARGH, DAMN IT!
THAT HURT...
CRACK
YUUKA–
NEE–!
Y–
...!
WHA–
No, that's not her!

...YU-!
SET
WHAT ARE YOU LOOK-ING AT
KID?
A lizard!
..HMM?
LISTEN UP.
FORGET WHAT YOU SAW HERE JUST NOW.
A lizard...
...tattoo!
think
OH, SO YOU'RE THE KID FROM THIS SHRINE?
UNDER-STAND?

...!!
Ah!
OH SO YOU'RE UP
YOU WERE SLEEPING IN THE HALL.
YOU WERE PROBABLY TIRED
THE FUNERAL'S
ALREADY OVER
What are you looking at,
kid?

crackle
crackle
crackle
crackle
AUGH—
AUGHH!
CLICK
BESIDES THA—
FOR NEE-CHAN TO REVIVE..
NO WAY
IT'S A DREAM
CRASH
rumble
rumble
WHAT WAS THAT SOUND JUST NOW ?
DAMN IT!
A BAR-RIER?!
pzzll

I THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING SO IT WAS YOU
SO IT WAS YOU, OLD MAN!!
STR
AIN
YOU SET UP THESE PETTY LITTLE TRICKS IN A TINY SHRINE LIKE THIS
STOP MAKING ME WASTE MY ENERGY! HURRY UP AND RE-LEASE IT!
HURR—

fu fu
YOU'RE NOT A LOW-LEVELED SPIRIT FROM AROUND HERE
OLD MAN, HURRY UP!
YU—
YUUKA-NEE-CHAN?

JII-CHAN!
IT'S DANGEROUS. GET BACK, SHINOBU
SO YOU'VE ENTERED A NEW BODY
BUT YOU STILL CAN'T MOVE HOW UNSEEMLY, TOKAGE
!!
SHOOSH

YOU FOOLS!
CRACK
GHEE!
IT'S FUTILE NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU COME, YOU UNDERLINGS!
CRACK

GET OUT OF THAT BODY!
crackl
crackl
crackl
YOUR PLACE IS NOT IN THERE
CATA STROPHIC SOUL!
SHUT UP!!
THIS IS ALREADY MINE.
A lizard tattoo!

UGH!
A-
ACK!
NEE-CHAN!
GET BACK SHINOBU
BUT NEE-CHAN'S..

BUT THERE'S SO MANY MONSTERS...
OH?
YOU CAN SEE THEM KID?
clatter
!
THAT IS NO LONGER YUJIKA
I'LL BE BORROWING THIS, OLD MAN
clatter
HEH HEH AS I THOUGHT,
A GIRL'S BODY IS DISADVANTAGEOUS

I'VE FOUND YOU, TOKAGE
GYAAAH!
GYAH!

EXCUSE ME
YES WHO IS IT?
I APOLOGIZE FOR CAUSING SUCH A RUCKUS AT NIGHT JUU-SHOKU
I AM KURIYAMA FROM THE TYPE THREE UNIQUE DISASTER COUNTER-MEASURE HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMPOSITE ENVI RONMENTAL POLICY DEPARTMENT
I HAVE COME TO AID YOU AGAINST YOUR UNIQUE DISASTER
creak
I WAS CORRECT TO RELEASE SHIKI
...!
THEY EVEN CAME TO RE-TRIEVE THAT UNPLEASANT THING POS SESSING THAT CORPSE

*Jimukyoku = chief priest of a Buddhist temple

SURRENDER QUIETLY
TOKAGE
EVERY SINGLE ONE OF YOU..
ONE AFTER ANOTHER ENDLESSLY..
ALL JUST GET IN MY WAY
...NO THANK YOU..
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE ALREADY
I'LL SEARCH HIM OUT AND UNDO THE CURSE

JUST BY BEING HERE YOU CAUSE CATASTRO PHES
DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND THAT?
UGH...
I WILL DRAG YOU OUT
YOU CAN'T PROPERLY MOVE A BODY YOU'VE JUST ENTERED
UGH!
U-
tighten
THUD
UGH!
GET OUT!
GET OUT, TOKAGE!
UAAH...

...!
Yuuka-nee-chan!
-AH...
Nee-chan!
GY-
SHINOBU!
STOP!
GET AWAY FROM YUUKA-NEE-CHAN!
LEAVE!

I DON'T GET THIS AT ALL!
WHY ARE YOU DOING SOMETHING SO CRUEL?!
NEE-CHAN'S DEAD!!
...THAT'S RIGHT. SHE, YOUR FRIEND, HAS ALREADY DIED.
SHE IS NOT HERE ANY MORE

NO!
THAT IS ALREADY JUST A CORPSE
MOVE WE HAVE USE FOR WHAT S INSIDE.
clatter
EVEN SO, IT'S NEE-CHAN'S BODY!
SO YOU'RE THIS GIRL'S RELATIVE
..AH ..
I SEE

PERFECT.
BECOME MY POWER.

NEE-CHA—
HOT!
!!

grab
DON T TOUCH ME YOU PIECES OF FILTH.
UAH--
-AH.
I'VE GOT NOTHING TO GIVE TO YOU
?!
A MAN'S BODY--?!
crackle
crackle
OH NO
DID YOU GAIN THE YORI'S POWER?!

BEGONE!!

...WHO ARE YOU?!
TWITCH
UGH!
...I REALLY CAN'T HOLD IT FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME...
WHOOSH
YOU'RE NOT YUUKA NEE-CHAN!!
JUST WHO ARE YOU?

TOKAGE

..UGH
WHY YOU YOU OLD MAN
YOU RE MAKING ME USE UNNEC-ESSARY POWER!
REMEM--
!
"Tokage."

That was the beginning.

Tokage

Tokage

SHINOBU—
I'LL KEEP WATCH, SO PLEASE GO GET SOME REST.
Just what..
Chapter Two

...was that?

"We have a use for what is inside."
"She, your friend, has already died."
"That is already just a corpse."
"You."
"You become my power."
BA BUMP

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THAT'S JUST...
!!
YUUKA-NEE-CHA—

After sleeping for three days,
the ghost wearing Neechan's face woke up with Neechan's body.
Its name was Tokage.
Everything else about it was a mystery.
Chapter Two

YOU'RE A KID WHO LIVES HERE?
YES
JUMP
HMM
AH!
WH-WHERE'S THAT OLD MAN?!
GLARE
I'm gonna tell him!
OH. YOU'RE AWAKE?
!!

YOU PREPARED BARRIERS IN THOSE GARDEN STONES—
JUST WHO–?
oh, you're energetic!
CLATTER
CLATTER
CLATTER
YOU'VE GOT SOME GUTS TO DO WHAT YOU DID TO ME BACK THERE—
WHO—
—IN THE WORLD ARE YOU?
YOU SUDDENLY ENTER NEECHAN'S BODY—
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING?
GRIP
HMM—
AH!

SO YOU'RE MY *YORI*?
YOU SEEM TO BE REALLY INTERESTED IN THIS BODY
WHY ARE YOU SAYING—?
OH, WELL I'LL MAKE A DEAL
A DEAD PERSON CAN'T JUST GO WANDERING AROUND HERE
I WANTED TO GET AWAY FROM HERE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
BUT BECAUSE OF THE BARRIER AND *HIM*, I CAN'T LEAVE THIS PLACE

IF I DON'T OBTAIN SPIRITUAL ENERGY FROM YOU, THEN THIS BODY WILL SOON ROT
AFTER ALL, IT WAS ORIGINALLY A CORPSE.
PUT SIMPLY, YOU'RE MY BATTERY
IF A BODY'S ORIGINAL OWNER HAS FIXATED ON SOMEONE, THEN— AFTER DEATH—THIS BODY WILL ONLY WORK IF IT'S NEAR THAT PERSON
YORI IS THE WORD FOR...
...THE RECIPIENT OF THIS LAST GRUDGE.
WHY AM I—?
I DON'T KNOW...
...BUT IT'S YOU.

WHY ?
WHY DID NEECHAN ?
THAT'S RIGHT
DID YOU HOLD MY HAND WHILE I WAS SLEEPING?
THAT WAS ...!
THANK YOU.
No...
BECAUSE OF THAT, I'M NOW ABLE TO MOVE.

...this isn't Nee-chan.
BA-BUMP
THAT'S RIGHT
YOU SAW THOSE LAST TIME, RIGHT?
!
IF YOU HAVE THAT MUCH SPIRITUAL POWER, THEN YOU'RE A PERFECT YORI-
BA-BUMP
NO!!!
Even though this isn't Nee-chan anymore...
...I'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT!!

I DON'T GIVE A CRAP...
WHAT S THIS?
YOU'RE NOT IN LOVE WITH THIS WOMAN, ARE YOU?
...ABOUT SPIRITUAL POWER OR YORI!
CLATTER
THE ONLY WAY TO OBTAIN STRENGTH FROM A YORI IS BY DIRECT CONTACT
THIS IS YOUR BE-LOVED NEECHAN, RIGHT?
WANT TO TOUCH SOME-WHERE OTHER THAN HER HAND?
STAND
...!!
EH!

OLD MAN...
kuku kuku
WHAT A CUTE KID.
stomp stomp stomp
...YOU KNOW WHO I REALLY AM, RIGHT?
IF YOU DO SOMETHING SNEAKY, I'LL CURSE YOU
I'VE HEARD FROM MY PREDECES-SORS,
BUT I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE YOU FOR MYSELF
Tokage...

The one bearing an unredeemable sin even in death.
Forbidden from the cycle of death and rebirth,
it is a spirit whom changes bodies, dying and living for eternity.
MY SPIRIT IS CURSED TO BE IMMORTAL
THE ONLY ONE CAPABLE OF UNDOING THIS CURSE IS HIM

I'M GLAD *THIS* BODY WAS MOSTLY OK
I PURSUED HIS SCENT UP TO THIS AREA,
BUT I LOST TRACK OF HIM IN THE CONFU SION OF THE ACCIDENT
QUITE PUSHY, AREN'T YOU?
UNTIL I REGAIN MY STRENGTH I CAN T MOVE UNLESS I M NEAR THE *YORI*
I'M GOING TO BE YOUR RESPONSI- BILITY FOR A WHILE, OLD MAN
KUKU. FROM THE START, YOU GUYS DON'T HAVE A CHOICE NOW
JUST BY BEING HERE I'M CREATING A DISTORTION IN THE SPIRITUAL STREAM...
ha ha ha
!!!

GUH—
—AGH!
cough!
cough
cough
BAS-TARD. WHAT DID YOU PUT IN THAT ..?
OH! SORRY ABOUT THAT!
blow blow
IT'S A MIRA-CULOUS ME-DICINAL BREW TREATED WITH PRAYER
IT MUST BE LIKE POISON FOR A HALF-SPIRIT LIKE YOU!
tremble tremble
OLD MAN. .
cough
UGH...
...
sip
"I'M GOING TO BE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR A WHILE, O GREAT GRAND-FATHER."
UGH ..
IT'S A BIT TOO QUIET, DON'T YOU THINK?
—I'M GOING —
I'M GONNA CURSE YOU SOMEDAY!

I don't get this at all...
...Nee-chan...
beeep
beeep
beeep
beeep
I NEVER WANTED...
...TO SEE THOSE THINGS...

DING DOOOONG
A MOVING TRUCK...?

OBA-SAN
THIS IS SUDDEN BUT I'VE VACATED THIS PLACE AND I'M RETURNING TO INAKA
ARE YOU MOVING...?
AFTER ALL I'M ALONE NOW

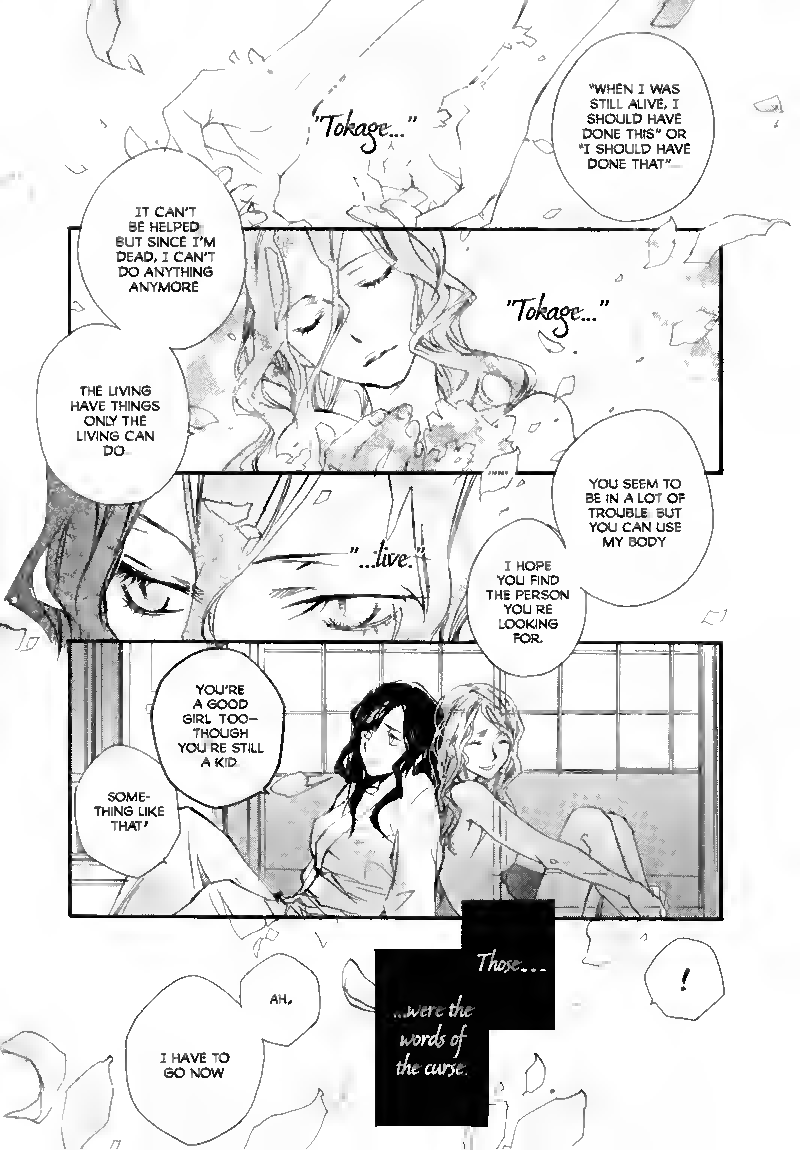
1

THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF US UP UNTIL NOW
NO, NO— I SHOULD BE THE ONE SAYING THAT
OBASAN DOESN'T KNOW ANY-THING
SHE DOESN'T KNOW YUUKA-NEE-CHAN'S BODY IS HERE
OH, THAT'S RIGHT BEFORE I LEAVE I WANTED
IS IT ALL RIGHT TO LEAVE IT LIKE THIS ?
I STILL WOULD LIKE TO HOLD THE 7TH-DAY AND 49TH-DAY CEREMONIES HERE
LIKE THIS...?
Yuuka-neechan...
Yuuka-nee chan's...
even for me...
THAT WAS A BIT CRUEL

DON'T BE MEAN TO SHINOBU-KUN'
I WASN'T BEING MEAN TO HIM'
THAT BRAT WAS THE ONE BEING REBEL-LIOUS.
I'LL DO THAT
SO I HAD TO PLAY THE ROLE OF MOTHER
WE WERE A FATHERLESS FAMILY--

ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT HIM?
YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE A BAD PERSON
MAYBE I SHOULD ASK YOU TO TAKE CARE OF SHINOBU KUN
THAT DAY, I SLEPT IN SO I COULDN'T GO WAKE SHINOBU-KUN UP
THE KID CAN SEE THEM, RIGHT? TELL THIS TO HIM YOURSELF.
NO, I CAN'T DO THAT.
WOW
THAT'S A CRUEL WAY TO REJECT THAT BRAT...
THAT CHILD HATES SCHOOL, SO HE OFTEN SKIPS
I WAS WONDERING IF HE WENT THAT DAY

I THINK THAT BECAUSE HE HIMSELF DOESN'T WANT TO SEE ME HE CAN'T.
ESPECIALLY SINCE HE'S WORRIED ABOUT BEING ABLE TO SENSE SPIRITS AND SUCH
OH?
"Tokage..."
HE'S A BIT COMPLI-CATED THAT CHILD.
BUT HE'S CUTE— SO DON'T TEASE HIM!
AND ALSO IT WOULD BE GREAT IF YOU COULD WAKE HIM UP IN THE MORNING IN MY PLACE
"Tokage, live."
I CAN T KEEP THAT MUCH OF A WATCH ON HIM
IT'S ONLY THAT MUCH! I'M GIVING YOU MY BODY..


"Tokage..."
"WHEN I WAS STILL ALIVE, I SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS" OR "I SHOULD HAVE DONE THAT"—
IT CAN'T BE HELPED BUT SINCE I'M DEAD, I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ANYMORE
"Tokage..."
THE LIVING HAVE THINGS ONLY THE LIVING CAN DO
YOU SEEM TO BE IN A LOT OF TROUBLE. BUT YOU CAN USE MY BODY
"...live."
I HOPE YOU FIND THE PERSON YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.
YOU'RE A GOOD GIRL TOO— THOUGH YOU'RE STILL A KID
SOME-THING LIKE THAT'
Those...
...were the words of the curse.
!
AH,
I HAVE TO GO NOW

BE CAREFUL.
HE CAN'T SEE ME
CAN HE?

SEE YOU

The words I tried to say...
...melted away along with the warmth of the fingers that left me.
IS THIS ALL RIGHT?

1
WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF HER DAUGHTER'S CORPSE JUST WANDERED OUT?
BESIDES, IT WAS HER DECISION.
..
SHE WAS LAUGHING.
Was this a broken heart from a lost love?
Or was it sorrow from being separated by death?
I didn't understand...
YOU'RE LYING.

SHE JUST ENTRUSTED YOU TO ME.
SUCH A CAREFREE PERSON.
...but five days after Neechan died...
I cried for the first time.

The back of
Takagi is like
this

Tokage

Tokage

THUD
I APOLOGI-!
GUH!
...AND?
YOU SAY THAT EVEN AFTER FINDING HER LOCATION YOU SHAMELESSLY RAN BACK HERE...?
BANG
UGH!
!!
Ande!
CRACK
CLICK
UNDERSTAND, KURIYAMA?!
WHAT I HATE...
...ARE HAIRY MEN AND MEN WHO PICK THEIR EARS...
...AND MEN WITH GLASSES WHO CAN'T DO THEIR JOB!!
Chapter Three
CHIEF- WE HAVE DETECTED A DISTORTION

APPROXIMATELY TEN DAYS AGO, THERE WAS A FUNERAL FOR A YOUNG WOMAN AT A SHRINE NEAR THE POINT. THAT BODY IS PROBABLY THE ONE.
OH? THANK YOU? ♥
NO!!
IT'S A MALE!
HMPH. FINE
HMPH
.. MALE..?
AT ANY RATE, IF IT'S HIDING FROM US NEAR THERE, THEN THIS WILL BE SHORT.
I WILL DRAG IT OUT.

Chapter Three

SNIP
SNIP
SNIP
SNIP
HE–
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
WHAT "WHAT?"
I'M CUTTING MY HAIR
Oops! I messed up there!
WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

I GOT THIS BODY FROM YUUKA I CAN DO WHATEVER I WANT
HUH?
DON'T DO WHATEVER YOU WANT TO NEE-CHAN'S BODY!!
IT'S A DISGUISE! A DISGUISE!!
YOU THINK SOMEONE WHO SHOULD HAVE DIED RECENTLY CAN WANDER AROUND LOOKING THE SAME?
BUT, THE HAIR...!
HAHAAA! WHAT'S THIS?
COULD IT BE THAT YOU LIKE GIRLS WITH LONG HAIR?
Hee Hee Hee
PULL
YEAH, RIGH-!
A-
SQUEEZE
AAAH!
HEY! STOP MAKING A FUSS!
LET GO!
I CAN'T OBTAIN POWER FROM YOU UNLESS IT'S DIRECT CONTACT!

SWIPE
LET GO!!
EEK!
SLIDE
Sorry, sorry, sorry!!
STAY STILL AND LET ME RECHARGE!!
AAAH!
STOP!
LET GO!!
AAAH!
WAVER
OW...
AH...
SHOCK
I'M SO-
Snort
JUUUST KIDDING!!!

GRIT
...!!!
THAT WAS DANGEROUS. DON'T GET ALL VIOLENT WHEN I'M HOLDING SOMETHING WITH A BLADE
YOU'RE..
...THE WORST!!
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
Lick
HE'S SO KIND

IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE HERE
THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE HEARD THAT CHILD RAISE HIS VOICE
OH?
WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING ABOUT?
HE TOLD ME I WAS THE WORST
hee hee
FAAFAA!
HE'S A QUIET CHILD. HE'S BEEN HERE SINCE HE WAS SIX YEARS OLD. NOT TO MENTION YELLING, HE DOESN'T EXPRESS HIS EMOTIONS VERY MUCH.
HAHA! HOW? ISN'T HE ALL ANGER?
IN THE PAST THERE WERE YOUNG UNS TOO. BUT RIGHT NOW IT'S JUST SHINOBU AND I.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, ARE YOU AND SHINOBU THE ONLY ONES AT THIS SHRINE?
THAT CHILD'S PARENTS ENTRUSTED HIM TO ME BECAUSE OF WELL... SITUATIONS SUCH AS DIVORCE AND TRAVELING OVERSEAS.
HMM.

IF I'M HERE THE SPIRIT STREAM WILL DISTORT
LOW-LEVEL SPIRITS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS THAT FIND THE DISTORTION WILL COME SWARMING
ARE YOU FINE WITH THAT?
HE'S A SHARP KID
SO IT'S HARD FOR HIM TO SEE
SO THAT'S WHY THIS SHRINE HAS A BARRIER ERECTED AROUND IT
WELL IT MAY BE A DRASTIC MEASURE BUT IT MAY BE A GOOD OPPORTU NITY
I WONDER. FROM MY POINT OF VIEW IT'S PERFECT
Perverted old man
I should have known.
Fap Fap
WHAT DO I DO ABOUT THESE CLOTHES AND UNDER-WEAR?
THEY'RE FEMALE
BY THE WAY OLD MAN
bpt bpt bpt bpt

OH?
IT HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL...
BPT
grip
BPT
BPT
SCREEE
BPT
...IN THE LAST SEVEN YEARS.

SHINOBU!
I MADE DINNER
YOU DON'T WANT ANY? IT'S GOOD
Thought I'm the one who's young this
I DON'T WANT ANY
I DON'T WANT TO EAT ANYTHING YOU COOKED
WHA-
AARGH!
BECAUSE I NEVER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT YOU WERE HERE.
WHAT'D YOU SAY?! AFTER ALL THAT TROUBLE I WENT THROU-
DING-DONG
DING-DONG
GRRRRR
I'LL GET IT

COMING!
clatter
BANG
BANG
BANG
WH-
HE'S HUGE...!!
WHO MAY YOU BE?

UM
EXCUSE ME!
AAH!
OOOH! IT'S SHI-NOBU!
YOU'VE GROWN BIG!
PICK UP
OH! YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME? YOU WERE LITTLE BACK THEN!
SLAP
SLAP
OSHOU - BUDDHIST PRIEST
PLEASE FORGIVE MY LACK OF CONTACT, OSHOU
YOU'VE GOTTEN QUITE A LOOK NOW
IT'S BEEN SEVEN YEARS SINCE YOU LAST SAW SHINOBU
SEVEN YEARS AGO...?
OH THAT WAS FAST
JII-CHAN!

Shunkei-kun, I'm going to go train in the mountains now!
EH?
SHUNKEI-SAN?!
BINGO!!
OH THAT'S RIGHT! I GOT CONTACTS NOW!
I DON'T THINK THAT'S IT
What happened in these seven years?
YOU CAN'T TELL WHO I AM WITHOUT MY GLASSES!
I WAS CONTACTED BY JII-SAN
GLUB GLUB
I WON'T BE LIVING HERE BUT I'LL BE HELPING OUT
YOU'RE BUSY, AREN'T YOU?
NO, IT'S NOT REALLY BUSY. RATHER...
YOU CRAZY LEECHING OLD MAN!
I TOLD YOU TO GIVE ME THE THINGS YOU WANT WASHED ALL AT ONCE!
SLAM
SO YOU'RE "TOKAGE?"

YOU RE QUITE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD
OLD MAN, WHO'S THIS SLOPPY MONK?
HE'S MY DISCIPLE
THOUGH I AM IN THE MIDDLE OF MY TRAINING BY THE POWERS OF KARMA I WILL BE TROUBLING YOU HERE AGAIN.
MY NAME IS SHUNKEI
BEST REGARDS FROM HERE ON OUT

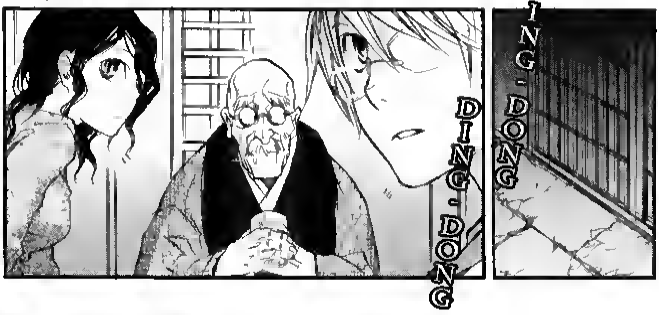
BUBBLE
WELL, JII-SAN'S GETTING IN HIS YEARS
AND, WHETHER IT'S MEMORIAL SERVICES OR OTHER THINGS I'LL HELP ALL I CAN
AND SO YOU'RE KEEPING WATCH OVER ME?
WHAT A CAUTIOUS OLD MAN
You're even washing the dishes
YOU'RE MORE NORMAL THAN I THOUGHT
"TOKAGE"
Is that so?
WELL YEAH, I'M A FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT RIGHT NOW
Hee Hee Hee
fighter

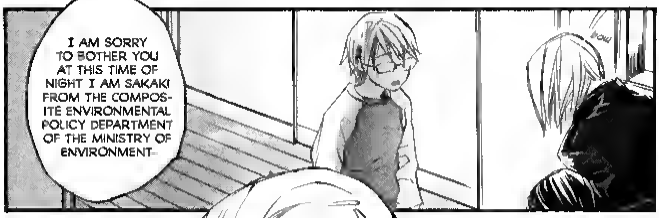
I WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE BY ALL MEANS!
IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE FACT THAT THAT BRAT WAS THE YORI, I'D HAVE BEEN LONG GONE!
WHAT MONSTER DID YOU IMAGINE ME AS?
I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D RESPECT THE REAL THING WHILE YOU'RE LIVING.
I THOUGHT YOU'D BE SOMETHING WITH MORE OF A WANDERLUST
AND BESIDES I WAS ASKED A FAVOR
?
HEY
I'VE ONLY HEARD THIS FROM OTHERS
IS THE CURSE YOU'RE UNDER SOMETHING THAT CAN BE BROKEN?

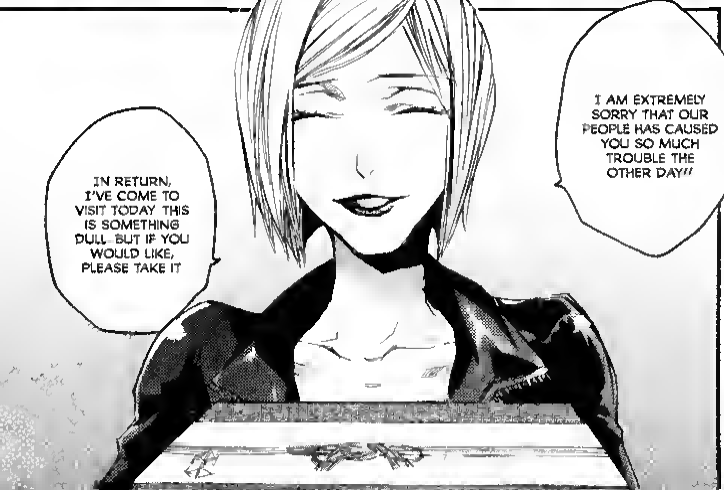
I'VE GIVEN UP ON THE PRINCE THOUGH
EVER SINCE ANCIENT TIMES IT HAS BEEN GENERALLY CONSIDERED THAT A CURSE CAN BE BROKEN BY THE CASTER IN QUESTION OR THE PRINCE
THAT CASTER IS...
THIS WAS EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS AGO, YOU KNOW? THE PERSON HIMSELF HAS LONG SINCE DIED
step step
THE PERSON I'M CHASING IS HIS REINCARNATION
HAHA, IT SOUNDS SO AIMLESS, DOESN'T IT?
BUT, THERE ARE NO OTHER POSSIBILITIES.

IT'S YOUR CHOICE WHETHER TO BELIEVE ME OR NOT
THAT IS MY ONLY WISH
I SEE AND SO YOU'RE BEING SHELTERED BY JII-SAN
?
WHY IS THE OLD MAN--
AH!
IT'S THIS TIME ALREADY?! I HAVE TO GO AROUND TO THE DANKA!
WELL I'LL BE COMING AGAIN!!
THE FOOD WAS GOOD!
DANKA - FAMILIES OF BELIEVERS WHO HAVE SERVICES PERFORMED IN THEIR HOMES
Bye, Shinobu!!
HE'S GOING LOOKING LIKE THAT ?
STOMP STOMP STOMP STOMP

CLACK
SO IT'S HERE...
SCREE
KURIYAMA BRING THAT OVER
EVERYONE ELSE, STAND BY OUTSIDE THE DOOR// WAIT FOR MORE ORDERS!
TOKAGE.
I WILL DRAG YOU OUT.


DING-DONG
DING-DONG


I AM SORRY TO BOTHER YOU AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT I AM SAKAKI FROM THE COMPOSITE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT-
HOW


I AM EXTREMELY SORRY THAT OUR PEOPLE HAS CAUSED YOU SO MUCH TROUBLE THE OTHER DAY!!!
IN RETURN, I'VE COME TO VISIT TODAY THIS IS SOMETHING DULL BUT IF YOU WOULD LIKE, PLEASE TAKE IT

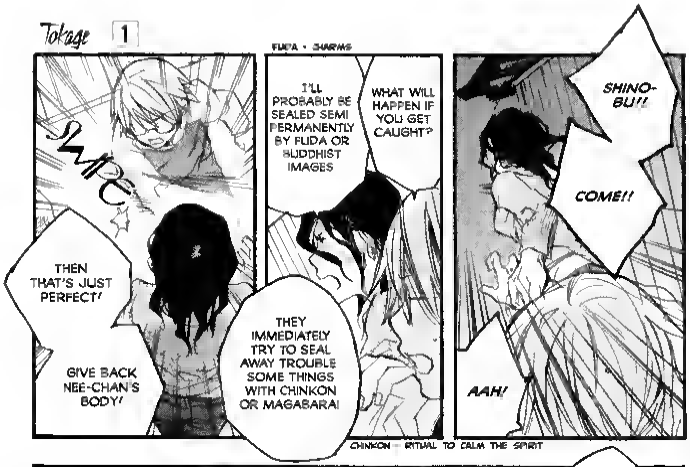
WHY, THANK YOU. HOW COURTEOUS...
...WITH AN OUTFIT LIKE THAT?
WHAT'S ALL THIS NOISE?
clatter
!!
SHOCK

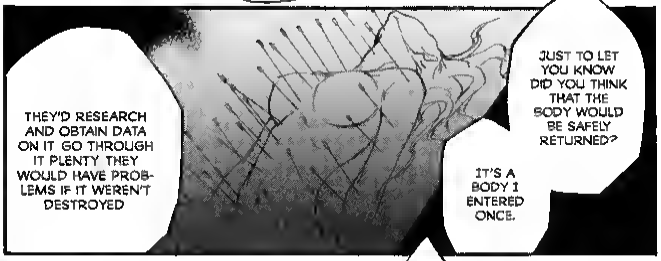
GET AWAY FROM THEM, SHINOBU!!
Are they cosplaying?
THEY'RE THE GUYS FROM LAST TIME!!
OH MY,
YOU'RE THE TOKAGE?
I HEARD THAT YOU WERE MALE.
BUT IT'S A GREAT WELCOME THAT YOU RE SUCH A CUTE CHILD
KURI-YAMA!!
RAISE A BARRIER IN THE PERI-METE-!!
YES!
CAPTURE THE TOKAGE!!
!!
RUSTLE

GRIP
CREAK
YOU'RE QUITE WEAK.
UGH..
TWITCH
FUFUFU...
NEE-
BOY,
IT'S DANGER-OUS. PLEASE STEP DOWN.
I DON'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING ROUGH.
IT'S A BEAUTIFUL BODY, AFTER ALL
STRAIN
NO ONE WOULD LIKE IT TO GET INJURED,
SHIT.. A FEMALE'S BODY HAS NO STRENGTH...
STRAIN
DON'T YOU THINK SO?

EE!
UAA!
AAH!
AAH!
BOY DO YOU NOW ABOUT SPIRITUAL SURGERY?
AGH...!
IT'S SURGERY WHERE YOU GET RID OF THE EVIL WITHIN THE BODY WITHOUT USING A KNIFE OR ANESTHESIA
S-STOP!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE AN EXPRESSION LIKE THAT!
IT'S BLEEDING BUT THE PATIENT DOESN'T FEEL ANY PAIN
YOU FUCKING LIAR--!
AAAH!

CRACK
SWISH
!!
LIKE I'LL BE IMPRISONED BY YOU GUYS!
THIS IS MINE!
CRACK
YOU RE RIGHT
IT WOULD BE A SHAME JUST TO IMPRISON YOU
IT SEEMS YOU WERE ILL-TRAINED LITTLE KITTY
DO YOU WANT ME TO RAISE YOU?


FUDA • CHARMS
SHINO-BU!!
COME!!
AAH!
WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU GET CAUGHT?
I'LL PROBABLY BE SEALED SEMI PERMANENTLY BY FUDA OR BUDDHIST IMAGES
SMPC
THEN THAT'S JUST PERFECT!
GIVE BACK NEE-CHAN'S BODY!
THEY IMMEDIATELY TRY TO SEAL AWAY TROUBLE SOME THINGS WITH CHINKON OR MAGABARAI
CHINKON – RITUAL TO CALM THE SPIRT


JUST TO LET YOU KNOW DID YOU THINK THAT THE BODY WOULD BE SAFELY RETURNED?
IT'S A BODY I ENTERED ONCE.
THEY'D RESEARCH AND OBTAIN DATA ON IT GO THROUGH IT PLENTY THEY WOULD HAVE PROBLEMS IF IT WEREN'T DESTROYED

THERE'S NO WAY-
OF COURSE THERE IS!! WHAT THEY WANT IS ME!
EVEN IF IT WEREN'T YOU UNDERSTAND JUST BY SEEING THAT WOMAN RIGHT?!

THERE'S NO TIME.
COOPERATE WITH ME
COOPER-ATE-?!
AAH!!
LET GO! WHAT..?
IT'LL FINISH SOON SO DON'T STRUGGLE

...ARE YOU DONE YET?
THERE'S ONLY MY HEARTBEAT
AAH!
YOUR BODY TEMPERATURE S HIGH I WONDER IF IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE A KID
BOOMph
THERE REALLY ISN'T A HEART-BEAT...!
SH—
SHUT UP! YOU RE COLD!
BOOMph
BOOMph
BOOMph
JUST A LITTLE MORE...
OH?
BOOMph
HERE YOU ARE, LITTLE KITTY

!!
THUD
GET AWAY, SHINOBU!!
PIERCE

Tokage

COUGH
Chapter Four
...I GUESS I MISSED THE HEART.

KURIYAMA RESTRAIN THE YORI
DON'T LET HIM GET NEAR THE TOKAGE
SPLATTER SPLATTER
NEE-CHAN!!

Chapter Four

*Reitou: Spiritual sword Benitoramaru: Crimson Tiger Circle

TOO BAD I DIDN'T WANT TO INJURE YOUR BEAUTIFUL BODY AFTER YOU FINALLY GOT ONE
THE PRETEND DOCTORING...
...WILL CONTINUE SLOWLY LATER
ADACHI! YAMAOKA! HURRY UP AND CARRY IT OUT.
TACHIBANA, SCATTER SOME CHARMS, JUST IN CASE.
NOW THEN...
WE WOULD LIKE TO TALK WITH YOU SO COULD YOU PLEASE COME WITH YOUR ONEESAN FOR A BIT—
IT MUST HAVE BEEN HORRIBLE FOR YOU, GETTING CAUGHT UP IN THIS
QUIT ENJOYING YOURSELF, WOMAN.

rustle
LET GO OF THE KID
YOU, TOO, GLASSES
NEE-CHAN!
YOU WON'T DIE EVEN WHEN YOU'RE STABBED
I'M SURPRISED
Ah...
The tattoo is disappearing...?!
!
NOW THIS IS WORTH EXPLORING
INTER-ESTING

I WONDER HOW MUCH DO I HAVE TO DO IN ORDER FOR YOU TO DIE?
I'LL TEST IT OUT THOROUGHLY.
S-
STOP!!
SHINOBU...
rustle
MORE...
THINK ABOUT ME MORE

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
?
IT'S FINE IF IT'S YUUKA.
CALL MY NAME
rustle
Y-
YUUKA-NEECHAN!
GRAB
DON'T YELL!
SILENCE HIM, KURIYAMA!!
YUUKA-NEECHAN!!

BOOM
BA
DUP

WHAT S WRONG?
WERE YOU NOT HESITANT ENOUGH WITH AN UNDYING BODY?
FLINCH
WHA—
A MALE..!
SHING
YOU BASTARD!!

PRIP
PRIP PRIP
SLIDE
STAB
YUUKA-NEECHAN!
THIS TIME YOU HIT DEAD CENTER
TOO BAD
MY HEART ISN'T THERE

IT'S HERE
The tattoo is on her hand...!
SCREECH
AH!
CRACKLE
CRACKLE

SNAP
ACK!!
THUD
CHIEF!!
RUSTLE
GAH!
DROP
!

AUGH!
DON'T COME ANY CLOSER!!
WHAT'S WRONG?
ARE YOU UNSATISFIED WITH A MALE BODY?
YOU DON'T WANT ME TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU?
I DON'T HAVE ANY BUSINESS WITH MEN!!
CHIEF!!
IF YOU COME ANY CLOSER, I'LL...
THUD
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
AIEE!!
THUD

OOMPH!
CRACK
HE BROKE THE DOOR WITH HIS BARE HANDS!
Ahhhhh
A STRANGE MAN CHARGED IN...
CHIEF!! THE BARRIER'S ...!!
HEY! ARE YOU OK?!
JIISAN!!
WHAT HAPPENED?!
SHINO-BU!!

SHUNKEI-SAN...
I CAME AFTER BEING CALLED BY JIISAN. THIS PLACE WAS SURROUNDED BY BLACK CARS!
A BARRIER WAS PUT UP, SO I COULDN'T GET IN
? ?
OH, SHINOBU!
TURN
JUST WHAT IS ALL THIS NOISE ABOUT?
A CIVILIAN?
AT A TIME LIKE THIS?
HEY, YOU THERE.
ARE YOU OK?
SITTING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS...
A male.

STOP MAKING A FUSS YOU'RE BEING ANNOYING
TOKAGE!
Ahhh
WHOA!
HEY WHAT'S WITH ALL THIS BLOOD?
CHIEF!!!
THUNK

DON'T INTERFERE WITH ME ANYMORE...
HUMAN.

...WHAT... AFTER ALL THIS?!
WE'LL FINISH THIS AFTER THAT.
...EVEN IF IT'S JUST FOR A BIT.
SHUUUUU

DO YOU KNOW JUST HOW MUCH OF A HINDRANCE YOU ARE? YOUR EXISTENCE CAUSES THE SPIRIT STREAM TO DISTORT
I CAN'T JUST LET YOU GO BECAUSE YOU TOLD ME TO
OUR DUTY IS TO SEAL YOU!!
A WISH...?!
I ONLY HAVE ONE WISH
I...

I WANT TO LIVE
AND DIE
IN THIS BODY
LIKE A NORMAL HUMAN BEING

THERE'S NO WAY I'M GOING TO GET MINCED IN PIECES BY YOU GUYS HERE.
LEAVE
NEXT TIME, JUST ONE KATANA WON'T BE ENOUGH.
WHAT.?!
CHIEF!!
I'LL BREAK THIS CURSE
AND PUT AN END TO TOKAGE
THAT IS MY ONLY WISH

TOKAGE!!
LET'S RETURN, CHIEF!!
I CAN'T!!
LET GO, KURIYAMA!!
THE RECORDS CAN'T BE LEFT STATING THAT ONLY BENITORAMARU WAS BROKEN!
UGH.
DON'T THINK THIS IS THE END!!
THE NEXT TIME WE FIND YOU, YOU WON'T GET AWAY!

COLLAPSE
YOU'RE NOT INJURED, ARE YOU SHINOBU?
YOU WERE LATE, YOU IDIOT! YOU SAID YOU WERE WATCHING OVER ME, SO WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU DOING?!
SORRY. ONE OF THE DANKA INVITED ME TO DINNER
THANKS TO YOU I GOT STABBED TWICE
STAB-BED?!
SHINOBU
YOU CAN DO IT IF YOU TRY SEE?

HAVE...
YOU YELLED THAT DESPERATELY EVEN ONCE SINCE YUUKA WAS ALIVE?
"IT WOULD'VE BEEN BETTER IF I'D SAID THAT..."
"WHILE SHE WAS ALIVE, I SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS OR THAT..."
...THAT'S ALL THERE IS, ISN'T IT?
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU LIVE IT DOESN'T CHANGE
NOT FOR ME...
AND NOT FOR YOU.

YOU NOTICE EVERYTHING AFTERWARDS
YOU WERE SCARED, WEREN'T YOU?
I'M SORRY
AN INJURY LIKE THIS WILL CLOSE QUICKLY SO THE SCAR--
WHY?!

BUT I DON'T GET THIS AT ALL!!
JIISAN AND SHUNKEI MAY KNOW SOMETHING
GRIP
NOT ABOUT YORI OR ABOUT CURSES—
OR ABOUT EVIL SPIRITS!!
WHY AM I..
Why am I?

...YOU'RE RIGHT
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW
...needed?

IS THE PLACE YOU WERE STABBED...?
YOU SURE EXAGGERATE TOO MUCH
OH— IT STINGS A LITTLE, BUT IT'S NOTH ING BIG

YOU HAVE TO EXPLAIN EVERYTHING
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T WANT TO GET INVOLVED WITH ME.
I'M BEYOND THE STAGE WHERE I CAN SAY I'M NOT INVOLVED!
YOU CAN PROBABLY TELL JUST BY LOOKING
BUT I AM CURSED WITH IMMORTALITY.

EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS AGO
I...
...ATE A GOD

Tokage

Chapter Five

"Tokage."
Those words...
"Eat me, Tokage."
..still bind me
"Live."
"Survive..."
"Survive and then..."
It's all past.
—AND THEN?

And then what did you want me to do?
GOD...
...IS AN AGGREGATION OF SPIRITUAL POWER.
A MASS OF STRONG FEELINGS
CURSES DISEASES
HE CAN EVEN CONTROL NATURAL DI-SASTERS
HE HAS THAT MUCH POWER

I ATE IT
THAT IS THE SOURCE OF MY CURSE

GOD
WHAT IS GOD?

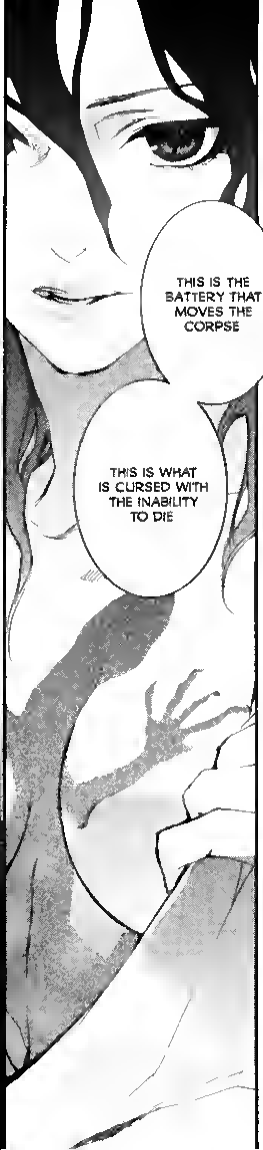
Long ago, in the province of Wakasa,* a fisherman caught a mermaid in his net.
He thought it was odd, so the fisherman brought it back and entertained all the other villagers with it.
However, the flesh of a mermaid, said to be God's messenger, was unpleasant, so no one ate it.
Only the daughter of the village leader, brimming with curiosity, ate it.
After that, the daughter never aged. Even after all the villagers died, she lived for several hundred more years.
HAVE YOU HEARD OF "THE LEGEND OF THE MERMAID"?
WHAT THE DAUGHTER ATE WAS TABOO MEAT
IT'S NOT SOME MIRACLE CURE THAT GRANTS PERPETUAL YOUTH AND LONGEVITY.
SHE COULDN'T DIE BECAUSE SHE WAS CURSED.

*Note: Wakasa is an old province in Japan. It is located in the south of today's Fukui prefecture.

It is a legend of this world, also known as "The Legend of Happyaku Bikuni."* After the daughter had wandered from province to province, she grew tired of the world and disappeared into Gozeyama.
*NOTE: HAPPYAKU BIKUNI MEANS EIGHT-HUNDRED-YEAR EIGHTH-WIFE PRIESTESS.
THERE IS ALSO ANOTHER STORY THAT GOES LIKE THIS.
THEY WERE VILLAGERS WHO HAD LOST THEIR WAY IN THE MOUNTAIN WHERE GOD LIVED. THEY COULDN'T WITHSTAND THE PANGS OF HUNGER ANY LONGER AND ATE CHAR* THEY HAD CAUGHT IN A RIVER THERE.
*NOTE: CHAR IS A TYPE OF FISH.
THE MEN HAD BEEN TOLD TO NOT EAT ANYTHING FROM THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD. NO MATTER WHAT.
BEFORE THEIR VERY EYES, THE MEN SPUT AT THE MOUTH AND GREW SCALES OVER THEIR ENTIRE BODY. THEY BECAME DRAGONS AND SANK INTO THE RIVER.
IT IS ALSO SAID THAT IF THE SACRED FISH ZAN WAS EATEN A GREAT TSUNAMI WOULD DESCEND.
THESE ARE THE FORBIDDEN FRUITS WE ARE ORDERED NOT TO EAT.
IN THE LEGENDS FROM THE VARIOUS LANDS, EATING THEM ALL COME WITH THE SAME PUNISHMENT.

THERE IS A REASON WHY THEY ARE LABELED "THINGS THAT MUST NOT BE EATEN."
THE CURSE
IN GENERAL, IT'S BECAUSE OF POISON OR INSECTS. BUT IT'S ALL THE SAME EITHER WAY.
BUT ... HOW COULD NOT DYING BE A PUNISHMENT...?
DID YOU THINK THAT DEATH WAS THE ULTIMATE PUNISHMENT?
THOSE WHO TASTE THE FORBIDDEN ARE PUNISHED

RUSTLE
!!
SHOCK
AH! WAIT A—
LOOK.
WELL, SEEING IS BELIEVING
THIS IS MY HEART.

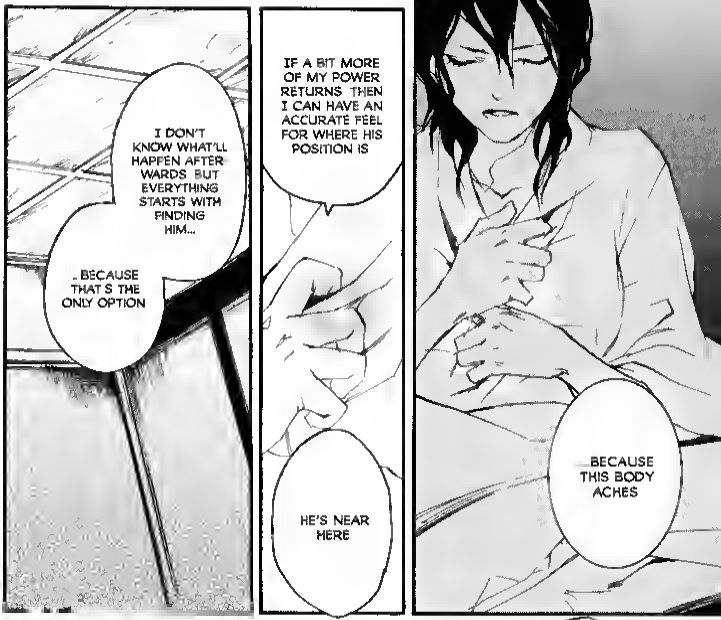


IF THIS BODY BECOMES UNUSABLE THEN I'LL SEARCH FOR OTHERS.

IT MEANS I LIVE AS A HERMIT CRAB DOES, ONLY INSTEAD MOVING FROM CORPSE TO CORPSE.

THE WOUND HAS ALREADY CLOSED...
...AND THE TATTOO THAT HAD BEEN ON HER ARM UNTIL JUST NOW
LIKE THIS I CANNOT DIE...
IN OTHER WORDS AS LONG AS YOUR TATTOO IS NOT ATTACKED YOU ARE IMMORTAL
ALSO AS LONG AS MY HEAD'S ATTACHED TO MY BODY
IF I'M CUT UP INTO PIECES, I'LL DIE
THAT IS THE CURSE
WELL THAT'S ENOUGH SPOILERS FOR NOW
I'LL HAVE TO HAVE YOU HIDE ME AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE

DOES THAT MEAN HE'S NEAR HERE?
HOW CAN YOU TELL?
I CAN—
—IS THE PERSON WHO ORIGINALLY CURSED ME.
WHAT I'M SEARCHING FOR
ONCE THIS IS OVER I'LL GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE, SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT
I DON'T REALLY WANT TO TRAVEL ALL THAT FAR
I'VE SPENT EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS ON THIS, SO IT CAN'T BE DEALT WITH IN THE USUAL WAY
WHEN THIS IS OVER ?
WHAT YOU'RE SEARCHING FOR IS—


I DON'T KNOW WHAT'LL HAPPEN AFTERWARDS BUT EVERYTHING STARTS WITH FINDING HIM...
...BECAUSE THAT'S THE ONLY OPTION
IF A BIT MORE OF MY POWER RETURNS THEN I CAN HAVE AN ACCURATE FEEL FOR WHERE HIS POSITION IS
HE'S NEAR HERE
...BECAUSE THIS BODY ACHES
BUT
NOT DYING IS SOMETHING EVERYONE WANTS
EVEN SO I DIDN'T WANT TO BECOME LIKE THIS.
I'VE LIVED FOR SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS, SO LOTS OF THINGS HAVE HAPPENED

"I want to live, and then die."
I thought that everything ends with death.
LIVING NORMALLY DYING NORMALLY
HAVING JUST THAT IS ENOUGH NOW
IF THE HARD AND PAINFUL THINGS
...can't end...
That hurt!
Plow
BESIDES, I'M TIRED OF ALL THIS VAIN CHASING AND PAINFUL EXPERIENCES!!
DYING...
ISN'T SOMETHING GOOD NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU DO IT
...will the suffering continue forever?

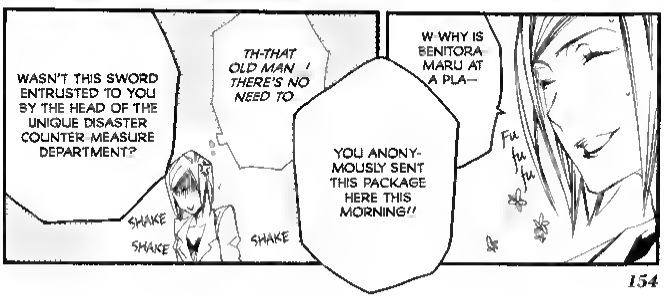
EH?
WHY MY...?
HM...THEN LET'S HAVE SHINOBU'S FUTON BROUGHT DOWN HERE
'K. SORRY 'BOUT THAT
SORRY,
BUT I'M GOING TO GET A LITTLE SHUTEYE
I'M KINDA SLEEPY NOW...
SHINOBU
JII-CHAN!
YOU'RE THE YORI, SO THE RECOVERY WILL BE FASTER IF YOU'RE CLOSER.
LIKE I'D DO THAT, YOU IDIOT!
WHOMP
YOU CAN DO DIRTY THINGS TOO

I didn't understand a single thing about the truth...
...whether it was about the curse...
WHAT THE HELL?
IN THE END, SHE'S SLEEPING LIKE A LOG...!!
...or about the God that Tokage ate.
IT'S NOT LIKE I WAS EXPECTING ANYTHING!!
NOT LIKE IT MATTERS.

All I know is that
HER HAND..
IS COLD
IT'S JUST LIKE A CORPSE S...
MMNG
!!
GRIP
SHOCK
CO-!

...DID YOU HAVE A NIGHT-MARE?
ZZZZ
ZZZZ
IT'S OK. GO TO SLEEP
I'LL BE HERE...
AH...
SORRY I WOKE YOU—
SQUEEZE
SQUEEZE
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN SLEEP
...WAS THAT SLEEP-TALKING?
ZZZZ

...SO, SAKAKI-KUN,
JUST WHAT IS THIS?
...!
...!


WASN'T THIS SWORD ENTRUSTED TO YOU BY THE HEAD OF THE UNIQUE DISASTER COUNTER-MEASURE DEPARTMENT?
TH-THAT OLD MAN...! THERE'S NO NEED TO
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
YOU ANONY-MOUSLY SENT THIS PACKAGE HERE THIS MORNING!!
W-WHY IS BENITORA-MARU AT A PLA—
Fu fu fu

WE EVEN RECEIVED A WARNING FOR ILLEGAL PARKING FROM THE POLICE...
IT WAS ALL I COULD DO TO BRING THE CHIEF OUT!
WHY YOU ARE YOU TALKING BACK?!
ON TOP OF TAKING IT OUT WITHOUT PERMISSION, IT IS INTOLERABLE THAT YOU ACTED OUTSIDE OF YOUR PERSONAL JURISDICTION!
THIS SWORD IS AN IMPORTANT FIRST CLASS CULTURAL ASSET IT SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR PRACTICAL BUSINESS!
WHY DIDN'T YOU RETRIEVE IT KURIYAMA?!
IN THAT SITUATION, THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN RECKLESS.
ARE YOU LISTENING?!
YES, SIR!
WE'RE LUCKY THAT THERE WERE NO COMPLAINTS FROM CIVILIANS THIS TIME AROUND
HOWEVER, I WOULD LIKE A REFLECTION PAPER AND A REPORT SUBMITTED BY TODAY
ALSO SAKAKI-KUN
BE PREPARED FOR A SALARY REDUCTION I BELIEVE THAT IS MUCH BETTER THAN BEING FIRED DON'T YOU?
!!

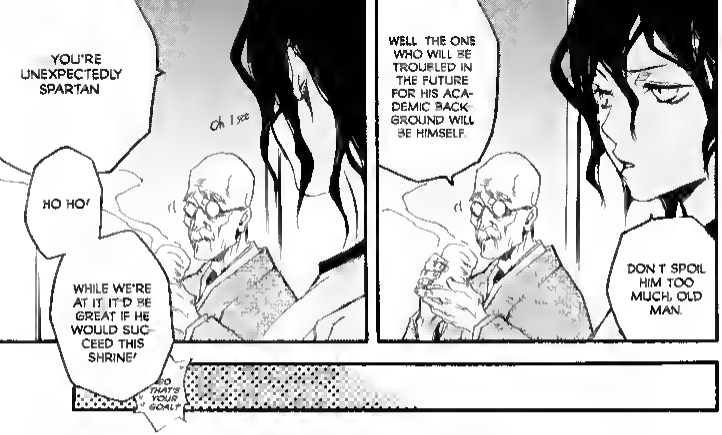
THEN
EXCUSE ME
BANG
WHY ME?!
CLI-
-CK
I TOLD YOU, YOU WERE TOO NAIVE!!
YOU BAS-TARD!!!
BOOM
EH?!
BANG
CHIEF, CALM DOW-!
BANG
WAI-! STOP!!
BOOM
THUD
ME? A REFLEC-TION PAPER?
PAINT
A SALARY REDUC-TION?
PAINT
PAINT

Stupid! Stupid!
HEE HEE HEE HEE!
THE REASON FOR ALL THIS
IS THAT DAMN TOKAGE!!!
GRIND
MURMUR
Oh my... Seriously Satoshi-san. You and your dog. [Dog] referring to Kuri-yama.
They think I'm crazy.
It's another disaster.
MURMUR
KURI-YAMA!!
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE REFLECTION PAPER AND THE REPORT AND WRITE THEM!!
I WOULDN'T BE ME IF I RETREATED LIKE THIS...!!
I'll choke the life out of him with my own hands!!
DRIBBLE
DRIBBLE

I'M SORRY, JIICHAN. I'LL GO MAKE THE BREAKFAST NO-
DISHEARTENED
UGH, I'M SLEEPY.
GOOD MORNING SHINOBU
YOU'LL BE LATE FOR SCHOOL
LATE--?

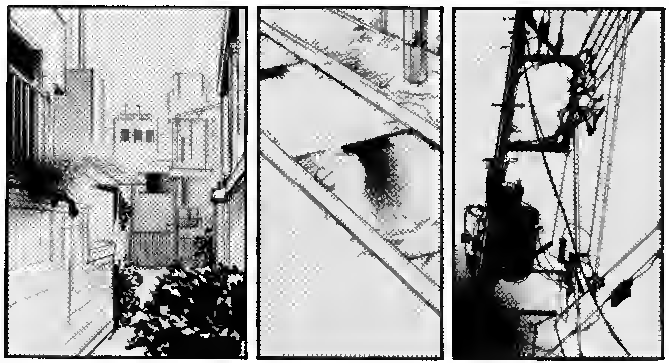
YOU'RE STILL IN MIDDLE SCHOOL PROPERLY ATTEND YOUR COMPULSORY EDUCATION!
BESIDES ISN'T THAT UNIFORM FROM A GOOD PRIVATE SCHOOL?
DON'T LOOK WITHOUT PERMISSION!
IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER.
EVEN IF I DIDN'T GO TO A PLACE LIKE THAT,
AS LONG AS I STUDY, EVERYTHING S—
WHAT IS IT?
Sxin
Sxin
Sxin
YOU FINALLY ATE IT
!!

MY, AREN'T YOU DISHONEST! YOU'RE SHY!
OH, WHY DON'T I PEEL SOME APPLES?
In the shape of a rabbit, I think!
NO NEED!
What the hell?!
NOT REALLY
I'M GOOD AT COOKING
ISN'T IT DELICIOUS?
HEHEE
SLAM
DON'T DECIDE THINGS ON YOUR OWN!!
I MADE YOU A BENTO.
AT ANY RATE YOU GO TO SCHOOL TODAY.
ALL RIGHT, CHANGE UP!
DON'T TAKE IT OFF, YOU IDIOT!
AHHH!
AHHH!
JUST DO IT ALREADY!
STOP NAGGING ME WITH EVERY LITTLE THING!
OF COURSE NOT! THERE'S NOTHING STUPID LIKE THAT!
YOU'RE NOT BEING TEASED, ARE YOU?
WHAT'S WRONG? CAN'T YOU BRING IT WITH YOU TO SCHOOL?


YOU'RE UNEXPECTEDLY SPARTAN
HO HO!
WHILE WE'RE AT IT, IT'D BE GREAT IF HE WOULD SUCCEED THIS SHRINE!
BUT THAT'S YOUR GOAL?
Oh I see
WELL THE ONE WHO WILL BE TROUBLED IN THE FUTURE FOR HIS ACADEMIC BACKGROUND WILL BE HIMSELF.
DON'T SPOIL HIM TOO MUCH, OLD MAN.

CLATTER
...I'M LEAVING
She made me wear this
EEEEE EEECH

SCREEECH
...WHAT WAS THAT?
AH

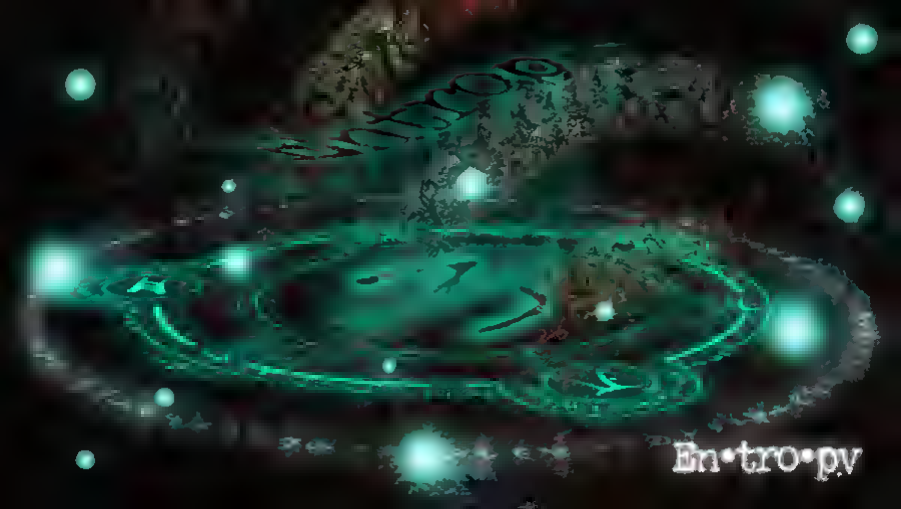


WHY?
I HAVEN'T SEEN THEM AROUND HERE FOR A WHILE NOW.
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
CRAWL
!!
CRAWL
RUSTLE
JII-CHAN
THERE'S SOME-THING I...
THEY'RE HERE...!!

SLAM
OH, IT'S YOU? DIDN'T YOU LEAVE JUST NOW ?
JII-CHAN
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK HORRIBLE
WHERE'S JIICHAN?
THE OLD MAN'S IN THE BATH-ROOM RIGHT NOW
SHINOBU?
HEY?
EVER SINCE YOU CAME,
EVERY-THING'S BEEN WEIRD
HEY, ARE YOU OK?
IS THIS
YOUR FAULT AS WELL?
EH?
SWAY

YOUR INFLUENCE PROBABLY HAS HAD SOMEWHAT OF AN EFFECT.
BUT THE COMMOTION LAST NIGHT MAY HAVE DESTROYED SOME BARRIERS...
JII-CHAN
THE SPIRIT STREAM IS DISTORTED. SO LOW-LEVEL SPIRITS ARE GATHERING
OLD MAN
HE LOOKS A LITTLE OFF
...OR PERHAPS...
THEY WERE ARTIFICIAL
CHITOSE
ARE YOU SURE IT'S HERE?
Nod

OH?
THAT KID HAS A CUTE FACE
WELL THEN, WE'LL BE HELPING OURSELVES NOW.


En•tro•pv

Tokage

Chapter Six

THE TOKAGE?
I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE IN THE OCCULT...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT CHITOSE?
DO YOU NEED YOUR MEDICINE?
...BUT PAPA WILL BELIEVE YOU.
SO IT'S AROUND HERE?
Cough
IT'S UNFAIR, ISN'T IT, CHITOSE?
FOR YOU TO SUFFER THIS MUCH...
...WHEN THERE'S AN IMMORTAL RUNNING AROUND

PAPA.
COUGH
CHITOSE
IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT
PAPA WILL BE WITH YOU
PAPA WILL PROTECT YOU
The black people came...

...and took Mama away.
CHITOSE.
TAKE CARE OF PAPA.
MA—
WHOOSH
BEEE—

That's why...
CHITOSE
SAY GOODBYE TO MAMA
I only have Papa and Papa only has me

HARUKI-SENSEI
THESE ARE THE RESULTS FOR THE INSPECTION FROM THE OTHER DAY.
I AM SORRY TO SAY THE YOUNG MISS HAS TESTED POSITIVE AS WELL.
I SUSPECT THAT IT IS THE SAME ILLNESS AS YOUR WIFE.
IT MAY BE ESPECIALLY INFURIATING FOR A DOCTOR LIKE YOU,
BUT THIS IS ALL MODERN MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY CAN DO.
...
IT HAS ONLY BEEN ONE YEAR SINCE YOUR WIFE DIED.
BUT IT CAN'T BE GUARANTEED THE ILLNESS WON'T IMMEDIATELY ATTACK, SO JUST IN CASE
Chitose...
If science cannot save you...

Wheeze!
COUGH
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I will save you.
SOON, WE WILL BE AWARDED THE GIFT OF IMMORTALITY.
...ONCE WE OBTAIN THE TOKAGE'S BODY
CHITOSE, I'M SORRY.
CAN YOU HANG ON FOR A BIT LONGER?
I...

HAVE YOU CALMED DOWN?
HERE, WATER.
THAT WAS MORE SERIOUS THAN BEFORE
IT'S BECAUSE YOUR ABILITY TO SENSE SPIRITS IS STRONG
NORMAL HUMANS WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SENSE SUCH A WEAK SPIRITUAL DISTURBANCE
I DIDN'T FEEL A THING THOUGH

MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE I'M HERE IN THIS TEMPLE. I'M COMPLETELY FINE, THOUGH.
HAHA. MAYBE IT'S THAT
Hmmm
YOUR STOMACH STARTED TO HURT BECAUSE OF THE PSYCHOGENIC STRESS CAUSED FROM NOT WANTING TO GO TO SCHOOL.
You're mentally weak.
BE QUIET!
ANNOYED
IF YOU GO OUTSIDE, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO SENSE SOMETHING.
I'M TELLING YOU, I CAN'T GO OUTSIDE
WHY?
?
TWITCH
GRRR
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO ERECTED THE BARRIER!!
OOH
SO THAT'S WHY.

THEN IT'S FARE-WELL TO THIS TEM-PLE!
GRAB
Hope
DON'T WORRY
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO GO OUTSIDE NOW
EH?
IT WAS ORIGINALLY A CHARM ONLY INTENDED TO WORK AGAINST ANYTHING BUT WEAK SPIRITS
YOUR POWERS SHOULD HAVE RE-TURNED BY NOW
HOHOHO
WHAT
Depressed

CAN YOU TAKE OUT THE TRASH AND DO THE SHOPPING ON TOP OF CLEANING AND WASHING?
Here
OH.. I GET IT
OLD MAN
It was for my sake..!
Tadaa
IT WAS PERFECT TIMING FOR YOUR HOST.
BUT THE COMMOTION LAST TIME ALMOST BROKE THE BARRIER.
OH, WELL
I MAY AS WELL TAKE A LOOK AT THE OUTSIDE WORLD ON THE WAY TO SHOPPING
KUKU
IT'S BEEN SO LONG!!

BUT
—IT IS THIS IT?!
WELCOME!
WHEN I WAS WALKING AROUND THE OUTSIDE WORLD I DIDN'T FEEL ANYTHING TOO WEIRD
HAS THAT MUCH OF MY POWER NOT RETURNED?
FIRST OF ALL, I DIDN'T FEEL ANY-THING
YET ONLY HE SENSED THE DIS-TUR-BANCE
EXCUSE ME—
—ARE YOU YUUKA-SENPAI?

YEEE
I THOUGHT YOU WERE SOME-ONE ELSE!
TH-THAT'S RIGHT I'M SORRY!!
JUMP
EH?!
N-NO, I M-NOT!
crying
I'M SOR
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I KNEW THIS COULDN'T BE TRUE. I MEAN—JUST LAST MONTH, SENPAI—SHE IN THAT ACCIDENT
I KNOW
A direct hit.
YUUKA-SENPAI WAS MY SENPAI FROM A CLUB IN MIDDLE SCHOOL.
YOU LOOKED A BIT LIKE HER—
I'M SORRY
...TO DO THIS TO A CUSTOMER..
D-DO I REALLY LOOK LIKE HER?
I DON'T THINK MY COVER S BLOWN—
OH! LINE UP AT MY REGISTER. I'LL GIVE YOU A DISCOUNT
I'M REALLY SORRY FOR SAYING STRANGE THINGS WHILE YOU WERE SHOPPING—
NICE!
SENPAI HAD A MORE SUBDUED FEELING ABOUT HER.
I WONDER WHY I MIS TOOK YOU FOR HER
IF I LOOK CAREFULLY, YOU DON'T
hehe.

I shouldn't be here.
..WAS WELL-LOVED
I'm a spirit that shouldn't exist.
THIS BODY...
I know.
THAT'S WHY...
..I HATE THIS.
IT'S HARD TO MOVE AROUND

I HAVE TO...
GO SOMEWHERE ELSE FAST
I'm a body that shouldn't exist.
THE FEELINGS ARE TRANS-FERRING
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
SLIDE
SLIDE
SLIDE

BE GONE!
BUT I DON'T THINK THESE KINDS CAUSED THAT SPIRITUAL DISTURBANCE...
THE NUMBER OF LOW LEVEL SPIRITS HAS INCREASED
WHOOSH
OH!
OH!
..A FEMALE BODY HAS NO STRENGTH AT ALL!
NAARGH
BUT SERIOUSLY

SPIRITUAL DISTUR-BANCE?
HMM... I THINK THEY'VE INCREASED A BIT...
BUT AREN'T YOU MUCH BETTER WITH THIS KIND OF THING?
WELL YOU SEE...
I'VE GROWN UNCONFIDENT, SO I WANTED TO ASK...
I THOUGHT MAYBE MY POWER HADN'T RETURNED FULL-FORCED YET...
SHINOBU HAS ALWAYS HAD GOOD SENSES HE'S SENSITIVE
EVER SINCE HE WAS A LITTLE KID HE COULD SEE VARIOUS THINGS
BEFORE WE WERE ASKED TO PER-FORM A FUNERAL, HE'D SAY THAT THERE'S SOME OLD LADY SOME-WHERE IN TROUBLE OR THAT THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT
IT SEEMS LIKE HE STARTED DISLIKING IT HIMSELF SO HE STOPPED SAYING IT AFTER A WHILE
OH?

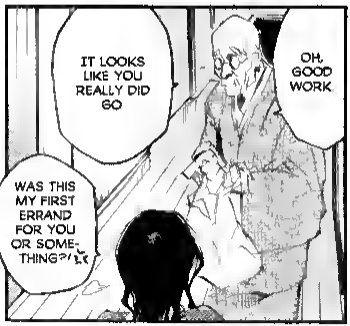
I DON'T THINK NORMAL PEOPLE WOULD BE THAT INFLUENCED
WELL AS LONG AS SOMEONE ELSE DOESN'T DIRECTLY AIM THEIR BAD INTENTIONS AT THEM,
AND SO HE BECAME THAT BRAT WHO ACTS TOO OLD FOR HIS AGE?
CHUCKLE CHUCKLE CHUCKLE

HM?
A GUEST?

I'M SICK, SO

IS THERE SOMETHING YOU NEED?
ARE YOU LOST?

IS THIS MY IMAGI NATION...?
SO YOU CAME TO PRAY?
WHAT FAITH! I M SO MOVED!


IT LOOKS LIKE YOU REALLY DID GO
OH, GOOD WORK
WAS THIS MY FIRST ERRAND FOR YOU OR SOME-THING?!

I'M BACK!
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT GUESTS

...YOU WERE TESTING ME, WEREN'T YOU, OLD MAN?
!!
DID ANYONE ASK ABOUT THAT BODY?
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
HEY! SHINOBU!!
EVEN IF THE BODY'S THE SAME, NO ONE WILL NOTICE IF THE FACE IS DIFFERENT!
THEN WHY ARE THE ONLY THING I SEE NOWADAYS THOSE THINGS?
YOU'RE JUST DULL!
LIKE I KNOW ABOUT THAT!
IF THEY WERE TARGETING ME THERE WOULDN'T BE A SPIRITUAL DISTURBANCE THAT ONLY YOU'D SENSE ANY WAYS
THERE WASN'T ANYTHING SPECIAL OUTSIDE.

SHI-
NOBU
LET'S TAKE IT OUTSIDE!!
WHAT'D YOU SAY, YOU LITTLE BRAT?!
STOP SHOUTING!!
CRUMPLE
IT WAS YOUR FIGHT!
AH!
OW!
IT'S ALL BECAUSE YOU'RE HERE THAT THESE STRANGE THINGS-
THIS GIRL HERE SAYS SHE WANTS TO TALK TO YOU.
CLATTER
WHO IS-
ME?

crackle
SCREEEE
AH!!
OW...!
THUD
SHI-NOBU?
HEY... WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
I DIDN'T...

SCREEECH
I CAN'T
THAT GIRL
Why?
Normal humans can't sense such a spiritual disturbance..
as long as
the evil intentions aren't intentionally directed towards them..

Tokage [1] Fin

THE TOKAGE TATTOO?

WHY IS IT THERE IF YOU CAN MOVE IT?
Oh? You're right.

IT'S BECAUSE IT'S IN SUCH AN EASY-TO-SPOT AREA. IT'S BEING TARGETED

HUM-PH...
YOU DON'T GET IT SHINOBU.
OR EVEN
OR ON THE BOTTOM OF YOUR FOOT!
YOU COULD PLACE IT SOMEWHERE INCONSPICUOUS AND SAFE
LIKE ON YOUR BACK OR YOUR ARM...
Nudging
?
SHU
Squeeze
THIS IS WHAT EVERY GUY WANTS
ERU
GET OUT!!
ALL OF YOU, GET OUT!!
Oh no!
Eeek!
WAHHH
TURN RED.
YOU'RE STILL A CHILD SHINOBU
AHAHA
Yeah.
IT CAN'T BE HELPED! IF THAT'S THE CASE IT CAN'T BE HELPED!
Because he's Shinobu!
fufu
NOTICE
!
Fin

yakumemo

はじめまして こんにちは。灰原 薫です。

「とかげ」1巻です／
巻数がつく漫画ははじめてで
たいへん緊張しております。
いろんな人に迷惑やら心配やらかけつつの
月刊連載(中)ですが、またまだもう少し
続きそうなのでがんばります／

いろいろと拙い限りなのですが
ご感想などいただければありがたいです。
続巻でお会いできますように//

THANKS!!

2006.09

ZERO-SUM COMICS

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